

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A medical image diagnostic system for providing an examination protocol including a photographing condition corresponding to a content of an examination for a subject, said system comprising:

a network to which a medical image diagnostic apparatus is linked; and

a server linked to said network, and configured to register an examination protocol for an examination to be performed by said medical image diagnostic apparatus in connection with examination information indicating a content of the examination, search for an examination protocol that matches with a request condition in response to a request to provide an examination protocol, sent from said medical image diagnostic apparatus, and distribute the searched examination protocol to said medical image diagnostic apparatus that has sent the request,

wherein said medical image diagnostic apparatus sends the request to provide an examination protocol to said server and receives the examination protocol distributed from said server via said network, and

wherein said server prepares a group of examination protocols including a recommended photographing protocol for each region to be examined, and distributes the group of examination protocols when a region to be diagnosed is specified as the request condition.

Claim 2 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1, wherein:

said network includes an external network and an internal network of a medical institution;

said medical image diagnostic apparatus is linked to said internal network; and  
said server is linked to said external network.

Claim 3 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 2,  
wherein:

said medical institution includes a plurality of hospitals;  
said internal network inter-links said plurality of hospitals; and  
said plurality of hospitals share the examination protocol.

Claim 4 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 2,  
further comprising:

a local server linked to said internal network and said external network, and  
configured to send, from said medical image diagnostic apparatus to said server, the request  
to provide an examination protocol, and send the examination protocol distributed from said  
examination protocol providing server to said medical image diagnostic apparatus that has  
sent the request.

Claim 5 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 4,  
wherein:

said local server registers examination protocols used in a plurality of medical image  
diagnostic apparatuses within said medical institution, distributes a corresponding  
examination protocol in response to a request to a medical image diagnostic apparatus that  
has sent the request, and, on behalf of said plurality of medical image diagnostic apparatuses,  
sends a request to provide an examination protocol to said examination protocol providing  
server and receives the examination protocol.

Claim 6 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1,  
wherein:

said server registers an examination protocol uploaded from said medical image  
diagnostic apparatus in response to a request to register an examination protocol, sent from  
said medical image diagnostic apparatus; and

said medical image diagnostic apparatus, via said network, sends the request to  
register an examination protocol to said server, and upon receipt of a response from said  
server, uploads an examination protocol set when an examination was performed on the  
subject to said server, together with examination information indicating a content of the  
examination.

Claim 7 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 6,  
wherein:

said server requests examination information related to an examination protocol to be  
uploaded, from said medical image diagnostic apparatus that has sent the request to register  
an examination protocol.

Claim 8 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 6,  
wherein

said server judges whether the examination information includes private information  
at a time of registration, and upon judging presence of the private information, registers the  
examination information by one of the following:  
by deleting the private information partially;  
by deleting the private information entirely; and

by replacing the private information with another information.

Claim 9 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1,  
wherein:

said server registers a keyword indicating a characteristic of the examination protocol from the examination information, and searches for a corresponding examination protocol based on the key word when the keyword is specified as the request condition.

Claim 10 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1,  
wherein:

said server registers an examination purpose for which the examination protocol is recommended as being optimal in connection with the examination protocol, and searches for an examination protocol recommended by the examination purpose when the examination purpose is specified as the request condition.

Claim 11 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1,  
wherein:

said server authenticates an access right when an access is made to said server.

Claim 12 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 11,  
wherein:

said server makes authentication based on identification information pre-assigned to said medical image diagnostic apparatus.

Claim 13 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1,  
wherein:

said server automatically distributes an updated examination protocol to a particular medical image diagnostic apparatus when a registered examination protocol is updated.

Claim 14 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1,  
wherein:

said server automatically maintains an examination protocol in a registered medical image diagnostic apparatus in the same state as a state of an examination protocol recorded in a particular medical image diagnostic apparatus.

Claim 15 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1,  
wherein:

the examination information includes a medical image acquired when an examination was performed according to the examination protocol; and

said server distributes the medical image included in the examination information when providing the examination protocol.

Claim 16 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1,  
wherein:

said server registers a customized result of the examination protocol.

Claim 17 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1,  
wherein:

the examination information includes an examination history of the subject; and

said server searches for a corresponding examination protocol based on the examination history when the examination history is specified as the request condition.

Claim 18 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1, wherein:

said server is linked to a vender terminal of said medical image diagnostic apparatus via said network, and thereby allows a vender of said medical image diagnostic apparatus also to share a registered examination protocol.

Claim 19 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 18, wherein:

said server registers an examination protocol provided from said vender terminal, and sends an examination protocol uploaded from said medical image diagnostic apparatus to said vender terminal.

Claim 20 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1, wherein:

said medical image diagnostic apparatus is an X-ray photographing apparatus.

Claim 21 (Canceled).

Claim 22 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1, wherein:

said server sets one of a trial period and the number of trials in an examination protocol to be distributed.

Claim 23 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1,  
wherein:

upon receipt of the request to provide an examination protocol, said server judges a type of said medical image diagnostic apparatus that has sent the request, and presents examination protocols usable and examination protocols unusable in said medical image diagnostic apparatus.

Claim 24 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1,  
wherein:

the examination information includes a name of a setter of the examination protocol;  
and

said server searches for a corresponding examination protocol based on the name of the setter when the name of the setter is specified as the request condition.

Claim 25 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1,  
wherein:

said server introduces a recommended examination protocol from a state of use of a user.

Claim 26 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 1,  
wherein:

a service provider managing said server charges a medical institution having concluded a service contract one of fixed fees in a period unit and fees for a quantity of downloaded data.

Claim 27 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 26,  
wherein:

when an examination protocol to be provided is set with one of a trial period and the number of trials, said service provider does not charge for the period nor up to the number of trials.

Claim 28 (Currently Amended): An information providing server for providing an examination protocol including a photographing condition corresponding to a content of an examination for a subject, said server comprising:

a communication portion configured to communicate with a medical image diagnostic apparatus via a network;

a registration portion configured to register an examination protocol used in said medical image diagnostic apparatus in connection with examination information indicating a content of an examination;

a search portion configured to search for an examination protocol that matches with a request condition in response to a request to provide an examination protocol, sent from said medical image diagnostic apparatus; and

a distribution portion configured to distribute the searched examination protocol to said medical image diagnostic apparatus that has sent the request,

wherein said server prepares a group of examination protocols including a recommended photographing protocol for each region to be examined, and distributes the group of examination protocols when a region to be diagnosed is specified as the request condition.



Claim 29 (Currently Amended): An information providing method for providing an examination protocol including a photographing condition corresponding to a content of an examination for a subject, said method using a server and comprising:

registering an examination protocol used in a medical image diagnostic apparatus in connection with examination information indicating a content of an examination;

searching for an examination protocol that matches with a request condition in response to a request to provide an examination protocol, sent from a medical image diagnostic apparatus linked via a network; and

distributing the searched examination protocol to said medical image diagnostic apparatus that has sent the request via said network,

wherein said server prepares a group of examination protocols including a recommended photographing protocol for each region to be examined, and distributes the group of examination protocols when a region to be diagnosed is specified as the request condition.

Claim 30 (Currently Amended): A medical image diagnostic system for providing an examination protocol including a photographing condition corresponding to a content of an examination for a subject, said system comprising:

a network to which a medical image diagnostic apparatus is linked; and

a server linked to said network, and configured to register a photographing protocol, which is a data set of photographing program in an examination protocol for an examination to be performed by said medical image diagnostic apparatus, search for a photographing protocol that matches with a request condition in response to a request sent from said medical image diagnostic apparatus, and distribute a searched photographing protocol to said medical image diagnostic apparatus that has sent the request,

wherein said medical image diagnostic apparatus sends the request to said server and receives a photographing protocol distributed from said server via said network, and

wherein said server prepares a group of examination protocols including a recommended photographing protocol for each region to be examined, and distributes the group of examination protocols when a region to be diagnosed is specified as the request condition..

Claim 31 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 30, wherein:

said server registers the examination protocol in connection with a target region examined; and

when an examination protocol for the target region examined is chosen in said medical image diagnostic apparatus, a photographing protocol correlated with the examination protocol is displayed on a monitor based on the registered information.

Claim 32 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 30, wherein:

said server registers information related to an operator in connection with the examination protocol; and

when the operator of said medical image diagnostic apparatus is chosen, an examination protocol correlated with the operator is displayed on a monitor based on the registered information.

Claim 33 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 30, wherein:

said server registers information related to the subject in connection with the examination protocol; and

when the subject who will take an examination by said medical image diagnostic apparatus is chosen, an examination protocol correlated with the subject is displayed on a monitor based on the registered information.

Claim 34 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 30, further comprising:

a controller configured to customize a photographing protocol based on information appended to image data acquired during an examination performed by said medical image diagnostic apparatus.

Claim 35 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 30, wherein:

said server distributes an examination protocol based on information related to a clinical path inputted from said medical image diagnostic apparatus.

Claim 36 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 30, wherein:

said server registers information from a medical institution, related to a time needed for one patient to perform an examination according to an examination protocol, and, when distributing the examination protocol, appends thereto the information related to the time needed to perform an examination according to the examination protocol.

Claim 37 (Original): The medical image diagnostic system according to claim 36,  
wherein:

the information related to the time needed for an examination distributed from said  
server is one of a maximum value, an average value, and a minimum value of times needed  
for an examination registered in said server.